



Operation Noble Eagle

At press time approximately 29,000 Army National Guard and Army Reserve soldiers had been called to active duty and continued to provide security at facilities around the country.

On May 31, National Guard troops ended their mission at more than 400 airports.

Two Department of Defense artists memorialized the military and civilian victims of the Sept. 11 terrorist attack on the Pentagon with a black and silver interior memorial that features the names, photos and biographies of the 184 people killed.

All service members, including Coast Guard members, who were on active duty on or after Sept. 11, 2001, are eligible to wear the National Defense Service Medal.

Operation Enduring Freedom

U.S. and coalition forces in Afghanistan continue searching along the border with Pakistan for al-Qaeda and former Taliban forces.

An Army three-star general assumed command of Joint Task Force-Afghanistan, which will consolidate operations in the country under one umbrella.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld met with U.S. troops and Afghan leaders during a five-day trip to Central Asia.

SPC Christopher Stanis



U.S. and Canadian troops at Bagram Air Base pass a sign honoring SPC Jason A. Disney, who died in an industrial accident.

U.S. soldiers join Canadian troops at a service held at Kandahar Airfield to mourn the deaths of four members of the 3rd Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Battle Group killed in a training accident.

SPC George Allen



After visiting the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld conferred with Afghan leaders at the capital city's presidential palace. Rumsfeld also visited U.S. troops stationed at Bagram Air Base.



Staff Sgt. James B. Connolly Jr., USMC

SGT Kevin P. Bell



A special forces soldier issues an Afghan recruit new uniforms and equipment in Kabul. SF soldiers have been helping to train and equip the new Afghan National Army, which is made up of men drawn from all of the nation's ethnic groups.

LTC Walter E. Piatt (left) and SGM Burnie Haney of Coalition JTF-Mountain accept a New York state flag from the NY Army National Guard's chief chaplain, Rabbi Jacob Z. Goldstein (right).



SGT Dave Marck Jr.



A hazardous-materials specialist with the 2nd Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team from Scotia, N.Y., analyzes a sample taken in Yankee Stadium.

New York

WMD Teams Respond to HAZMAT Threats

AS OF APRIL, 27 certified Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Teams had been activated and were engaged in missions around the country. Five more teams have been authorized and are in the planning stages. The joint teams, which include full-time Army and Air National Guard members, react to suspected nuclear, biological or chemical incidents and help protect possible targets within their assigned Federal Emergency Management Agency regions.

The 2nd WMD-CST responds to incidents in FEMA Region 2, which includes New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The team's mission is to identify substances, assess consequences and advise civilian first-responders. It also facilitates requests for additional federal and state assets.

The team conducted air sampling at the World Trade Center site, responding within

hours of the Sept. 11 attack. Since then, it has assisted New York City emergency-management agencies at such events as the New York City marathon, the American League playoff and World Series games at Yankee Stadium last year, and the season opener at Yankee Stadium in April.

Using sophisticated equipment and a mobile analytical laboratory, team members can take solid, liquid or air samples and test them for chemical or biological substances. They can also do rapid DNA sampling and chemical analysis to identify potential toxic substances. Team members explained they don't routinely set up a decontamination site on a precautionary mission, but do have that capability.

Acting commander MAJ Kaarlo Hietala said hazardous-material control expertise is in high demand since Sept. 11 and the subsequent anthrax attacks through the mail, but most emergency services agencies have competing priorities.

"It's hard for any agency to focus on HAZMAT alone," he said. "For us, it's a full-time job.

I think that's what really separates us." — *SFC Kathleen T. Rhem, American Forces Press Service*

Alexandria, Va.

ASK SAM for Assignment Preferences

A NEW computer program called the Soldier Assignment Module, or SAM, encourages soldiers to "ASK" for their future duty assignments. The Assignment Satisfaction Key is the enlisted soldiers' portion of SAM, which allows them to stipulate assignment choices instead of waiting for the Army to make those choices for them, said officials at U.S. Total Army Personnel Command.

The PERSCOM officials said SAM is used by enlisted assignment managers to de-

termine who is eligible for a particular assignment. "But SAM also engages soldiers in the assignment process, giving them a voice and some control over their career paths," said MSG Thomas Gills of PERSCOM's enlisted distribution division.

SAM was designed to collect reassignment data so that enlisted assignment managers can make decisions using all available data, said Gills. Soldiers fill out an online form, stating their assignment preferences and their home and e-mail addresses.

However, SAM also works without soldier input, which means that if a soldier doesn't use ASK, he or she will be assigned solely on the needs of the Army, said SGM Oscar Garcia, ordnance branch sergeant major.

Excellence Awards

Communities Are Honored for Improvements

THE 417th Base Support Battalion in Kitzingen, Germany, is this year's Army Communities of Excellence and the Army Commander in Chief's Award winner for Installation Excellence. Fort McCoy, Wis., earned second-place honors in this year's competition. Winners were chosen for their continuous improvement in the ways in which they work with their customers, partners and suppliers.

As the ACOE award winner, the 417th BSB received \$1 million in prize money, a silver trophy and an ACOE flag. As the Army winner of the CINC award, the battalion received a plaque, an installation excellence flag and a congratulatory letter from President George W. Bush. Fort McCoy received \$250,000 in prize money. Award money will be used for installation improvement.

Other finalists in this year's competition included the 7th Infantry Division and Fort Carson, Colo.; 10th Area Support Group, Torii Station, Okinawa, Japan; 20th ASG, Area IV, Korea; Iowa Army National Guard; Rock Island Arsenal, Ill.; U.S. Army Aviation Center, Fort Rucker, Ala.; U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico and White Sands Missile Range, N.M. — *Army News Service*

SAM looks at 33 assignment rules, such as time on station, MOS, rank and volunteer status for assignment. Then the program creates an availability list from ASK data, placing PCS-eligible volunteers at the top of the list. If a soldier wants to go somewhere that is not available but a similar assignment is open, managers can e-mail the soldier and offer the alternate assignment, Gills said.

To find ASK, log on to AKO and go to Frequently Used Links and click on Assignment Satisfaction Key. Soldiers must use their AKO login information to use ASK. — *SFC Lisa Beth Snyder*

Heidelberg, Germany

USAREUR Improves Service to Newcomers

SPONSORSHIP Gateway to Europe, better known as S-GATE, is a web-based program that eases incoming soldiers' transition to Europe and makes sponsoring those soldiers easier.

"S-GATE provides soldiers and units a multitude of information at the click of a mouse," said project manager MAJ Kimberley Sinclair, describing the kind of information and assistance the program offers.

"Soldiers can learn of their 'pinpoint' assignment, get information to help make family travel decisions, get community information or communicate by e-mail with their sponsors," she said. "It provides a 'one-stop shop' for information concerning the assignment and a simple means of contacting the unit."

The incoming soldier's main source of information in S-GATE is the "soldier page," <https://www.sgate.>

hqusareur.army.mil, which can be accessed from a computer that is part of a military network, Sinclair said. Newcomers start here to find who their sponsors are and how to contact them. The soldier page also includes the pinpoint assignment, a welcome letter, a needs-assessment checklist and links to other useful regulatory information and USAREUR Web sites.

More information about the Sponsorship Gateway to Europe link is available at www.1perscom.army.mil. — *USAREUR Public Affairs Office*

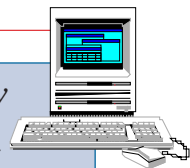
Washington

AKO E-mail Use Increases

SINCE Army senior leaders mandated that soldiers and civilian employees sign up last year, Army Knowledge Online accounts have increased from 170,000 to more than 900,000.

"AKO is adding about 2,500 new users a day," said Harold Tucker, AKO systems architect. "In addition, since the AKO-account directive, we've seen daily portal usage rise from about 5,000 user sessions to 70,000."

Access the Army Knowledge Online portal at www.us.army.mil



Using an AKO e-mail address doesn't mean soldiers surrender their current military or commercial e-mail accounts. In fact, with AKO's forwarding rule, e-mails from "us.army.mil" addresses can be automatically forwarded to any other e-mail address a user selects, AKO officials explained. They said users can do this by clicking on the "personalize" button after they log on, and then choosing "user profile." — *ARNEWS*

Washington

DOD Cancels Crusader

SAYING that it was a case of balancing resources needed to fight the war on terrorism with resources needed to transform to the future force, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announced in May that the Crusader weapons system program has been officially terminated. Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz said a budget amendment will redirect Crusader funding to other Army Transformation programs.

At the time of its cancellation the Crusader program had become the subject for speculation in the news media after Army documents supporting Crusader had been circulated among members of Congress. Kenneth A. Steadman, principal deputy of the Office of Congressional Legislative Liaison, later accepted responsibility for the unauthorized release of the documents and has since resigned his post.

Crusader had been planned as the replacement for the M109A6 Paladin self-propelled howitzer. But Wolfowitz said the proposed Crusader system was not light enough or precise enough to meet DOD's transformation objectives. — *ARNEWS*



The cancellation of the Crusader system will result in the redirection of released funds to other Army Transformation programs.